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RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 0086  
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO  
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SUBJECT: Santiago Nov. 12 Media Report

#### Lead Story

[¶1.](#) Centro de Estudios Publicos poll for the presidential election: Sebastian Pinera 36 percent, Eduardo Frei 26, Marco Enriquez Ominami 19, and Jorge Arrate 5 percent (Conservative, influential El Mercurio, 11/12).

#### U.S.-Related News

[¶2.](#) Arturo Valenzuela was sworn in yesterday as Assistant Secretary of State for Latin America (El Mercurio; conservative independent La Tercera, 11/11).

[¶3.](#) The Army has organized an international conference on mapping starting November 15. For six days experts from 150 countries will discuss new mapping technologies, satellite images, and tools and its uses. Vice Admiral Robert Murrett, Director of the U.S. National Geospatial Intelligence Agency, is among those attending (El Mercurio, 11/12).

#### Honduras

[¶4.](#) Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Craig Kelly returned to the United States empty handed after a two-day visit to Honduras. Kelly tried to bring both parties in conflict back to the negotiating table (El Mercurio, 11/2).

[¶5.](#) OAS Secretary General Jose Miguel Insulza said the regional organization "cannot even consider" sending observers to the November 29 election in Honduras as requested by de facto President Roberto Micheletti (Conservative, afternoon La Segunda, 11/12).

#### CEP Poll

[¶6.](#) The September CEP poll showed minor variations compared to the August survey: While Pinera decreased one percent

and Frei two, Enriquez-Ominami increased two. Arrate is approaching the 5 percent that candidates of the far left have received in past elections (Conservative, independent La Tercera, 11/12).

¶7. Political analysts comment on the CEP poll. Maria de los Angeles Fernandez, of Chile 21 Foundation, said the poll shows that although Pinera is ahead in the presidential race, he seems to have reached a ceiling. She noted that although the percentage for Enriquez-Ominami has consistently increased, it is unlikely he will be able to reach Frei. Guido Romo, from research center Geminis, said the poll shows that the August-November campaigns had no effect on voting patterns. Gonzalo Muller, from Universidad del Desarrollo, said the results did not answer the main question, which is who would go to a runoff with Pinera, because while Frei is losing votes Enriquez-Ominami is gaining them. Furthermore, he said, the results in an eventual runoff show that Enriquez-Ominami is a stronger candidate than Frei (Business, financial Diario Financiero, 11/12)

¶8. We can draw the following conclusions from the CEP poll: The voting percentage for each of the three main candidates - Pinera, Frei, Enriquez-Ominami-- did not vary more than 3 points compared to the August poll; 14 percent said that they are undecided; in the 2005 presidential election 15 percent voted null or did not vote. We can assume, therefore, that it is unlikely

that there will be any significant change in the number of individuals who will not vote in the December election (Catholic University professor Rodrigo Salcedo; Government-owned La Nacion, 11/12).

#### Venezuela

¶9. Editorial: "Hugo Chavez... is doubling his efforts to increase his hold on power....Given the somewhat tired decision to blame U.S. imperialism, Chavez has now made Colombia its new target. In his most recent remarks... Chavez ordered the Bolivarian Forces to prepare to wage war on Colombia.... This kind of rhetoric is very dangerous, because Chavez could resort to extreme tactics including war to hold on to power.... Other government in the region see this as threat too, such as Brazil that offered immediately to mediate in the crisis.... Venezuelan analysts ... anticipated recently said that Chavez has three real options to create a situation to stay in power: an auto coup, an artificial civil war, or a war on Colombia. Any of the three are possible... and all of them are equally bad for Latin America. But the latter is the worse of them" (El Mercurio, 11/11).

SIMONS